



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

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State Health Department Reminds Residents About Indoor Air Issues Connected to Home Remodeling

BISMARCK, N.D. – In conjunction with *Home Indoor Air Quality Month*, the North Dakota Department of Health is reminding residents to address concerns about lead, asbestos and mold before remodeling work begins, according to Mark Dihle, asbestos coordinator for the Department of Health.

Governor John Hoeven has proclaimed October 2009 as *Home Indoor Air Quality Month* to encourage North Dakotans to learn more about indoor air quality issues.

According to Dihle, people who are planning to remodel or renovate their homes should be aware of hazards like lead paint, asbestos and mold. Health risks are created when walls are opened up and dust from the hazard is breathed in by occupants and workers. The most effective way to improve indoor air quality is to eliminate individual sources of pollution and to reduce dust from the sources.

The North Dakota Department of Health recommends that homeowners test remodeling areas for the presence of lead paint and asbestos materials before beginning a renovation project. If either of these hazards is present, removal may be necessary and should be done only by a trained and licensed professional.

Mold cleanup also can release hazards into the air. Begin mold cleanup only after the moisture problem that caused the mold is properly addressed. If you have an extensive amount of mold and you do not think you can manage the cleanup on your own, you may want to contact a

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professional who has experience in cleaning mold. If you choose to do the cleaning yourself, take steps to protect yourself and others during cleanup.

“People who have asthma or lung problems and those who are allergic to mold are especially vulnerable to mold-related illness,” Dihle said. “It is very important to clean and disinfect the areas infested with mold and to remove the source of the moisture so mold doesn’t grow again.”

Information about dust control, indoor air hazards, and proper cleanup activities can be found at the North Dakota Department of Health website at www.ndhealth.gov or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency at www.epa.gov.

Anyone who has questions about the cleanup and preparation of homes for remodeling can contact his or her local public health unit or the North Dakota Department of Health at 701.328.5188.

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